

# 20 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR REMOTE WORKFORCE ENGAGED

As more and more companies transition to a fully remote workforce, keeping employees engaged becomes more challenging – but we’re here to help! Here’s a list of ideas to get that coffee station meet-up feeling, or happy hour bonding engagement, in a virtual world.

## 1. Trivia Day / Night

This is actually something we do quarterly at Wisetail. We pick a trivia day and a new host each time. Every hour, on the hour, the host presents a question in our trivia Slack channel. We also encourage the use of Google by making our questions and answers quite obscure. The first person to answer CORRECTLY wins that hour and gets a prize. We’ll include a list of prize ideas at the end.

Tweak this for an after-hours event and have a trivia night! Set up teams that can chat in private group messages or breakout rooms to come up with an answer and message their answer to the trivia host. The team with the most correct answers at the end wins.

## 2. Coffee Hour

Even though you can’t all meet up at the coffee pot in the break room, you can still enjoy a hot cup of joe together. Set up a video meeting at whatever interval works for you – we do one quarterly for our whole company, and every few weeks with smaller groups – have everyone grab their favorite morning beverage and spend that time catching up.

## 3. Volunteer Day

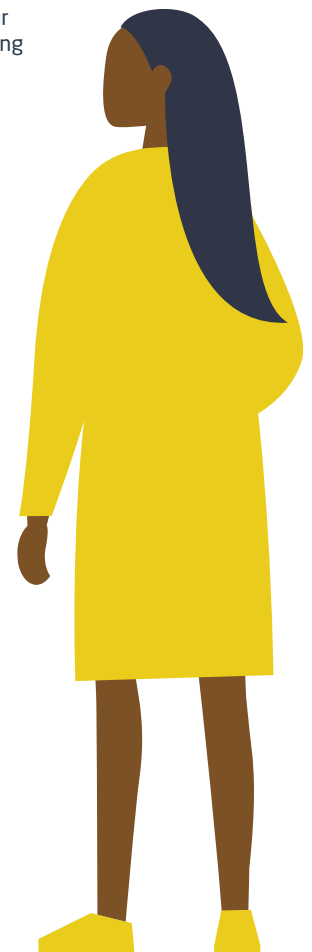
Maybe you set up a theme, or maybe you leave it open. Either way, set aside a day where everyone on the team volunteers with a local nonprofit. Ask people to take pictures and share their experiences with the rest of the team! This is something we do quarterly at Wisetail and our team loves it. It’s a great way for us to practice what we preach in sustainability and giving back to the community.

## 4. Flat Persona Project

You’ve heard of Flat Stanley, right? It doesn’t have to be just for kids. Create a fun persona for your company and print out a flat version of it. Then, start some chain mail. When a team member receives your Flat Persona, they have to bring it on an adventure – big or small. Take a picture and post a story about that adventure in your LMS’ user contributions, or in your shared messaging platform. Once you go on your adventure, mail it to the next team member. It’s a great way to learn about your team’s interests outside of work and to learn more about the place they live.

## 5. Scavenger Hunt

Create a list of things you can find in virtually any place – parking meters, wildlife, a letter of the alphabet, or a weird street sign. Post the list to your team. They’ll need a time frame, their smartphone, and somewhere to send their pictures. Have your team members share their photos to the whole team, and again – incentivize them with cool prizes! Here’s a fun idea: find something / someone in someone *else’s* pictures to make it even more interactive.



## 6. Game Night

Pictionary and Charades can definitely be played virtually with a few modifications! Set up your video meeting and select who is going to be “it” first. Then give them a certain amount of time to draw or act out something in any way they can. Everyone gets one guess after time is up. They write it down, send it to the host, and the next person draws or acts. Count up who got the most correct answers at the end and, you guessed it, give out prizes. There are also websites that host online games in this fashion: Kahoot, skribbli.io, gartic.io, and codenames are just a few.

## 7. Virtual Workouts

This could be yoga, pilates, boot camps, spin classes, or whatever you’d prefer. Bring in guest coaches or figure out if someone on your team has a passion for fitness and wants to lead. Teams that work out together, stay together. That’s a saying, right?

## 8. Secret Santa

We’re probably all familiar with this one – an anonymous gift exchange. Everyone can put in their names and addresses virtually, and you can ship the gift. Just ask someone from another department to help facilitate the Secret Santa assignments, and you’re off to creating some holiday cheer.

## 9. Create Clubs

Running club, gardening club, chess club, crafting club, true crime club – the possibilities are endless. A great way to connect your teammates is allowing room for shared interests to blossom. They can share photos, stories, tips, and tricks. This one is great for encouraging cross-departmental engagement. At Wisetail, we have a wide variety of our own clubs!

## 10. Slack Channels

Create channels to serve as a place to connect on a non-work level. At Wisetail we LOVE animals, so we have a channel dedicated solely to sharing fun pet pictures – #WisetailsofWisetail. This one is a team favorite for us.

## 11. Start Your Weekly Meetings with Fun

Weekly team meetings are the norm in remote settings. Why not start off your meetings by having people share the best **non-work-related** thing they did that weekend? It’s a great way to share and connect with your team, and learn more about them outside of the office. We all need to celebrate personal wins!



## 12. Professional Development Opportunities

Set up opportunities monthly, quarterly, or even yearly that the entire company can participate in to enhance their skills or learn something new. According to LinkedIn's 2019 Workforce Learning Report, 94 percent of employees say they would stay longer at a company if it simply invested in helping them learn. By investing in professional development opportunities, you're investing in more engaged remote employees.

## 13. Yearly Retreats

Sometimes the best way to connect on a personal level is to be in person. Celebrate a years' hard work by meeting up in one place. You can use this time to plan for next year while offering fun activities for team members to enjoy.

## 14. Challenges & Competition

Nothing gets people working together like a good challenge, right? Have departments compete against each other, or issue a challenge and see if different departments can work together to beat corporate.

## 15. Words with Friends Tournaments

This one takes a little setup, but as long as you have a smartphone, you can play! Set up a tournament bracket and give each game a time limit. That way people can play words as they have time, so long as the game is over by the deadline. If not, whoever is in the lead moves to the next round. This could be done with a number of different app games!

## 16. Live Music – Virtually

Many bands have figured out how to share their shows with a virtual audience all over the world; take advantage of that! Work with a band to provide a live show after work. It's as if you all went out to listen to music together in person, but you're doing it virtually!

## 17. Support Side Interests

Allow time for your team to work on side projects of their choice. Take it a step further and set up meetings with supervisors monthly or quarterly where you can chat about their side projects and get support. This is an idea we actually borrowed from Joooble. We learned about it in [this article by Forbes](#), and we think it's pretty great.

## 18. Contests

We know, this is pretty broad, but the sky's the limit here. You can create step contests, kitchen contests based on one crazy ingredient, workout contests, poetry contests – you name it! And, of course, incentivize with prizes.

## 19. Show Your Appreciation

We call them Wisebirds. Each quarter every team member is given 4 Wisebirds to award. If someone steps in and saves the day, or completes a big project, or just knocks your socks off – give them a Wisebird. They can then redeem their Wisebird from a pool of gift options and have it drop shipped directly to their house. We run this program through our own LXP, "APEX", so when someone is recognized it gets added to their profile and everyone can see it.

## 20. Utilize Your LXP's Social Features

You didn't really expect us not to tell you how our awesome LXP can keep your remote team engaged, did you? Wisetail helps you build your digital water cooler by encouraging learners to access cross-functional materials, break down work silos, enable internal communication, and create socially connected teams no matter the distance.



## Prize Ideas

- **Virtual Gift Cards** – Amazon, Starbucks, local shops, online retailers like UberEats or DoorDash, Walmart or Target, Best Buy, REI, TaskRabbit, Airbnb, Etsy, Postmates, and even Visa gift cards are all universally loved. They're a great way to reward your employees in a more private and personally enjoyable way. Everyone loves a good gift card.
- **Time Off** – Free PTO or bonus days off are always a hot ticket item. Who doesn't love extra vacation or time off? This works well for almost any type of prize – it's a reward for hard work and a fiery incentive for competitions.
- **Merch Giveaways** – While not everyone loves company swag, if you get creative with it, you can make something for everybody. We've got fanny packs, unicorn hats, sweaters, pins, all sorts of fun things. This one can be seasonal, too – a nice blanket for winter is always a winner.
- **Gifts** – Special pre-selected gifts and prizes make it fun for everyone – create a "catalogue" of items and allow your team members to choose which prizes they want. We have a pretty wacky catalogue, including dog toys, bluetooth speakers, beeswax food wraps and laptop tables. This method works great for ongoing engagement initiatives, like our Wisebird program.
- **Certificates or Vouchers** – Instead of gift cards, certificates for dinner for two, cooking lessons, or location-specific prizes are great. Maybe even a day pass to a ski resort, or, if it's a big ticket item, a season pass.
- **Mystery Boxes and Gift Boxes** – There are plenty of companies who offer custom or pre-made gift boxes. You'll need to be realistic with the size of your team and your budget, but this method grants you flexibility without consuming all of your time.

Whatever you choose to do, make sure your team knows you care about them as a person. They are more than their job, so take the time to get to know your team and encourage them to get to know each other.

If participation is low – don't worry! Your early-adopter group will encourage and engage fellow co-workers, and before you know it, you'll have the whole team involved.

Here at Wisetail, we're dedicated to building communities – no matter where you are. If you need help creating programs to keep your remote workforce engaged, reach out to us any time – we can brainstorm together and chat about your engagement goals.



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